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Traditional Textile Printing between Spontaneity and Planning: A Study of Creative Practice

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Abstract

Creativity and design thinking skills are considered pillars in arts practice in general. Traditional arts education, in particular, involves a tension between pure technical skill and the ability to design creatively regardless of craft limitations. The present study focuses on eliminating the boundaries between craft and art and bridging the gap between technical skills and creativity in practicing traditional textile printing arts. The paper presents a teaching procedure that is based on exploring traditional textile printing within a new dimension and achieving a balance between both the technical and creative sides. The study proposes a survey model to investigate the impact of the applied procedures and understand students' perceptions of the full range of the traditional printing creative process in action. The conclusions of this

study will aid in the development of traditional arts education and practice in general and their re-exploration as flexible, expressive, and creative forms of art.

Introduction

The work of art is an active and experienced action (Dewey, 1958). Its creative practice is considered “the watchword and focal point” of design and art education (Wright, 1990, p. 50). Several studies have focused on the creative process of art as much as the end product. Mace and Ward (2002) divided the creative practice in the field of art and design into four stages: conception, development, creation, and artwork completion. Additionally, Botella et al. (2013) suggested six stages of creative practice: the main idea, documentation, sketching, testing ideas, drafting, and the final result. The creative process in art does not depend on sudden inspiration but mainly is based on technical knowledge, some argue (Edmonds & Candy, 2002). Gaut (2010), however, demonstrated that intent is essential to the creative process. Again, other perspectives mention creative practice is frequently associated with intuition, which is defined as an unplanned or deliberate activity (Holt, 2015). According to Sowden et al. (2015), improvisation is a key element of the creative process in the art education field.

Understanding creative practice is closely associated with the nature or concept of the practice itself, Yokochi & Okada (2020) argued. Traditional arts are mostly considered crafts that require a high degree of technical skills (Jin, 2022). Technical knowledge and skills are more substantial in the traditional arts creation process compared to the contemporary arts (Sunarto, 2015). Traditional textile printing arts, in particular, involve complicated procedures that require practice, effort, and time to master. Compared to other forms of arts, traditional arts education needs more attention, effort, and development (Kokko & Räisänen, 2019). This is highly challenging in accelerated times like these, as mentioned by Daryanti et al. (2020), “The continuity of traditional arts depends on the role of future generations who have the potential to preserve them” (p. 589). Thus, the sustainability of traditional arts primarily depends on future generations' development of creative practice in addition to their efforts and time dedicated to learning technical skills.

In this paper, I argue teaching traditional art needs to move toward the direction of creativity beyond technical skills, achieving the balance between these two sides represents a challenge for the instructor or lecturer (Ronkko et al., 2016). Therefore, new insights are needed on how to shift traditional arts education in the direction of creative practice. Therefore, I demonstrate how creating a learning-centered educational environment encourages students' creative practices since the creative practices in art education are impacted by “the experiences lived by individuals and emotions” (Zamar & Segura, 2021, p. 1). The students' creativity can be

significantly impacted by the way they are immersed in educational activities and experience their flow state (Roth et al., 2022). Unfortunately, many current educational environments do not actively promote cognitive states like "flow" (Beese & Martin, 2019, p. 4). To address this issue, this study focuses on exposing and engaging students in new perspectives of traditional textile arts to enhance their creative practice in addition to learning technical skills. By considering the students' experiences as an essential part of the educational process, I hope to foster an environment that encourages creativity in practicing traditional arts.

At the Faculty of Applied Arts, Damietta University in Egypt, I had the opportunity to teach first-year students the traditional textile printing course. My teaching approach involved encouraging students to experiment with the wide potential of traditional textile printing, allowing for creative thinking and practice. For example, I tried to evoke my students' creativity and curiosity. I encouraged them to take risks and fully immerse themselves in exploring the various hand-printing techniques (e.g., tie-and-dye, stencil, batik). They were able to rethink traditional textile arts, expressing and practicing their perceptions in unconventional ways. They were not only mastering the technical aspects of traditional arts, but they were enjoying experimenting, and expressing their visions and experiences. This kind of creative practice falls into the space between the concepts of art and craft. The primary distinction between these two concepts is the level of adherence to established traditions. Craft is often associated with technical skill and functional processes, while art is more focused on the act of creation itself (Ihatsu, 2002). This paper elaborates on my traditional textile printing course and presents a qualitative study to explore in depth the creative practice of traditional textile printing arts in an educational context. The study examines students' activities, experiences, and interactions before, during, and after the creative practice of traditional textile printing. It aims at eliminating the boundaries between craft and the arts, unleashing the students' creativity to explore the various possibilities of traditional printing techniques. The primary objective of the study lies in presenting a novel model for rethinking traditional textile arts education and considering the students' perceptions and practices to reveal the creative nature of traditional arts.

Before I present the current study, the paper presents a thorough discussion of creative practice in the context of textile arts, highlighting the productive tension between spontaneity and planning. I proceed with an exploration of similarities and differences of art and craft and will relate the current research to these theoretical insights at the end of this article.

Context of Research

Creative Practice between Spontaneity and Planning

Art is not an isolated event confined to its final appearance, it also involves the experience of

the artist and the process of creating it (Dewey, 1958). Thus, we need to focus on the practice process along with the final art product. Interpreting the tension between spontaneity and planning is necessary to comprehending the art and design creation processes (Turnhout et al., 2017).

Stone (2015) stated that the creative process is a manifestation of spontaneous inspiration. It arises unplanned and stems from the unconscious. Creative artists just need to begin working for inspiration to flow, as all creative ideas originate unplanned from the creation process itself (Stone, 2015). "Spontaneity means self-caused movement" (Bruya, 2010, p. 207), through which the artists can capture their initial feelings and thoughts. Spontaneity is associated with practicing the work of art, as artists improvise and interact with physical material, revise and redesign their work, or discard it entirely upon completion. The spontaneous artwork is not pre-planned but is based on the instantaneous capture of initial thoughts and feelings. When an artist begins to create a specific composition on a canvas, she/he may suddenly change direction. "This new direction leads to additional ideas, triggering a flood of editing and reworking of the painting" (Stone, 2015, p. 96). For example, in Picasso's studio, he experimented with colors and lines without planning. He started with the figure of a nudist, and then the curve of the woman's leg reminded him of a matador's leg. He painted a matador. This led him to another idea: he painted over the image again and again. After five hours, he stopped and discarded the canvas. "The time wasn't wasted; he discovered new ideas that resulted from his interaction with the canvas that he was able to use in his next painting". (Sawyer, 2000, p. 149). Many theories linked the quality of the artwork to improvisational action; as Collingwood described, the real work of art does not include planning; "its only place is in the artist's head" (Collingwood, 1938, p. 130). However, this does not imply that the work of art is entirely created in the artist's mind. It means that it primarily originates from the artist's imagination. "It is deliberate, yet unplanned" (Grant, 1987, p. 246). Motherwell emphasized that creative art cannot be predetermined as "it emerges from the constant interaction between artist and medium" (Terenzio, 1980, p. 9). Also, in Dewey's theory of art as experience, he described the artwork as a blend of spontaneous and improvisational actions, as "the creative ideas are relevant to improvisational performances", thus they originate unconsciously after immersing oneself in work (Sawyer, 2000, p. 149). Trofimov et al. (2021) illustrated that spontaneity is a way for creative practice to exist; it is not a condition that exists in isolation, but both of them are connected with subjectivity.

Veon (2014) discussed that the process of creating art starts with practical and conscious planning. The classical definition of planning is "a method of carrying out activities through a carefully devised strategy to increase efficiency and effectiveness" (Woerkum et al., 2011, 144). Yokochi and Okada (2007) described art creation as an organized process that begins

with planning, choosing the main subject, required tools, and suitable motifs. Marshall (2010) revealed that the creative process follows Wallas' model, which consists of four stages: preparation (gathering ideas and information), incubation (combining ideas, exploring new possibilities), illumination (emerging ideas), and evaluation (putting the idea into its complete form). These stages can overlap and repeat themselves, as the creative process is not simply linear; "it is more cyclical" (Sawyer, 2006, p. 167). These stages highlight the role of planning as an essential element in the creation process. Even though art is often seen as an intuitive act, the creation process "requires insight achieved by a mature and conscious mind" (Rayan, 2007, p. 156). Traditional forms of art are considered crafts serving a determined purpose (Harsma, 2010). Therefore, their practice includes specific functional procedures and requires more deliberate planning.

Spontaneous creation is defined as a "problem-finding" process, as the artist searches for the problem while improvising his/ her art (Sawyer, 2000, p. 153). The artist finds the problem during work unexpectedly, something that the artist does not definitely foresee, which keeps the felicitous quality of the artwork and saves it from being mechanical (Dewey, 1958). On the contrary, the "problem-solving" style requires a detailed plan before working because the artist defines the visual problem before executing his/her artwork (Sawyer, 2000, p. 153). Many theories distinguish art and craft according to the creation process. Collingwood (1938) mentioned that artists are problem-finders, whereas craftspeople are problem-solvers. Also, Dewey (1958) discussed that rigid end-product predetermination results in the production of a purely mechanical product. Therefore, in the gray area between art and craft lies the tension between spontaneity and planning.

In the educational context, creative practice is a process that includes a unique combination of technical skills, knowledge, and experiences. Several studies have been conducted on enhancing creative practice in this context. Swin (2019) suggested that allowing students to express their individuality is crucial in promoting creative practice in educational environment. Luetkemeyer et al. (2021) stated that the students' engagement in the creative practice leads to a more significant, memorable, and productive learning experience. Also, the flow theory has been linked to exploring students' creativity, motivation, and engagement within the educational environment (Beese & Martin, 2019). According to Peifer et al. (2022), the flow state leads to a positive emotional impact and total immersion in an experimental and challenging activity. The flow experience represents the primary motive for engaging in activities and supports creative practice (Lucznik et al. 2021). In arts education, the creative practice is highly influenced by the students' lived experiences and emotions (Zamar & Segura, 2021). Providing an emotionally safe space for students by minimizing competition, provoking challenges, and demonstrating acceptance of the student's individuality and unique expressions is paramount (Fuss & Daniel, 2020). Enhancing the creative practice in art

education involves creating space for students to express their perspectives, experience flow, and engage in the teaching procedure.

Traditional Textile Printing between Art and Craft Concepts

Various scholars view craft as a skilled, repetitive, and traditional activity, whereas art is viewed as a more expressive, creative, and communicative practice (Owen, 2005; Davies, 2006). Craft is related to techniques and other functional processes, while art is centered on the idea of creation, as it is viewed as an “expressive-based and creative activity” (Pöllänen & Ruotsalainen, 2017, p. 2). Harsma (2010) argued that all forms of artwork require a certain level of knowledge and craft skill, blurring the boundaries between art and craft. Others confirm this, such as Veiteberg (2005), who demonstrates the space between art and craft is intervening, and the distinction between them lies in the commitment to traditions and the liberation from them. Regardless of the medium used, whether it is drawing, painting, printing, photography, mosaics, ceramics, textiles, or any other, the original and creative use of any material, even if it is related to a specific craft, is considered a form of art. Recently, in some geographical regions, the boundaries between craft and art have blurred, such as sculpture, fibre art, and architecture, where the production process involves both manual and mental dexterity (Auther, 2008; Kuleeva et al., 2021).

Traditional arts reflect any society's identity and culture. However, with the rapid progress of technology and industry, these arts are in imminent danger of extinction. Higher education institutions play a major role in sustaining and developing these arts (Al Shenawy & Tawfiq, 2022). Creativity is key to preserving and reviving these arts (Daryanti et al., 2020).

Traditional textile printing is the process of coloring textile substrates to create certain patterns and designs, “as it combines multiple techniques and concepts” (Nafady, 2021, p. 318). It includes the creation of high-end handcrafted products through complicated manual techniques. While manual textile printing methods like batik, tie-dye, and stencil are considered basic and necessary skills for textile designers, they are often seen as “traditional” and “old-fashioned” crafts rather than dynamic and creative forms of art (Jones, 2016, p. 7). It was common to consider any textile-related art a pure form of craft and a “low art” due to its ties to specific procedures, activities, and media that are identified with the female gender (Harsma, 2010, p. 3). Lately, traditional textile arts have defied these stereotypes, as creativity and imagination have become integral parts of the production process (Pöllänen & Ruotsalainen, 2017). Textile craftspeople are no longer viewed as “passive hands, but rather as independent creative artists and professionals” (Tyabji, 2016, p. 23). The design process in the textile field includes “the aesthetic and technical functions”, where both the idea and the action of creation are involved (Rizali, 2018, p. 3). Manual textile printing methods, in particular, provide vast potential for professional artists and designers to create unfamiliar

forms that combine creative thinking and practice with traditional skills. Therefore, traditional textile printing involves art, design, and craft activities in a unique combination that requires a deeper understanding of its nature and creation processes. Teaching this kind of unique combination requires special consideration, like developing the students' hand skills and their ability to explore, experiment, and express their ideas in a non-conventional way.

The Applied Study of Creative Practice

In Egypt, textile-related hand techniques are still categorized as crafts (El-Batraoui, 2016; Elbarbary, 2020). Although textile printing graduates are expected to pursue careers as professional textile designers, the primary focus of teaching traditional techniques courses at the majority of art and design faculties is typically to acquire the basic knowledge and mechanical steps needed for implementing manual techniques.

This qualitative study was conducted during the academic year 2021-2022 on the traditional textile printing course at the textile printing undergraduate program, at the Faculty of Applied Arts, Damietta University in Egypt. The course's teaching procedure has been designed to balance both technical and creative aspects of traditional textile printing arts. It depended on promoting the students' creative practice by considering their emotions and lived experiences. The proposed survey and observations during the course sessions are the main data-collection methods in this study. These data collection methods aimed to reveal the role of creative practice in producing the diverse potentials of traditional textile printing and to investigate students' perceptions of the manual printing creative process.

The Nature of Traditional Textile Printing Course

The traditional textile printing course at the Faculty of Applied Arts, Damietta University in Egypt, is a mandatory course for first-year students in the Textile Printing, Dyeing, and Finishing Program. This course is four hours per week and extends over two semesters of twenty-eight weeks. The participants in this study were first-year students in the textile printing department at Damietta University, Egypt. There were 33 students in attendance, ranging in age from 19 to 21 years old.

The course aims to teach students basic hand-printing skills to prepare them as textile printing designers. The course is rooted in the view that textile designers should be considered as artists with sufficient knowledge of the technical aspects related to textiles. They should understand the creative potentials of traditional textile printing and learn how to express their authentic selves by crossing over the boundaries between art and craft.

When I was tasked with teaching this course, I adapted both subject-centered and learner-

centered approaches. I did not only focus on educating students about the necessary knowledge and technical skills for traditional textile printing, but I also encouraged them to think creatively and apply the traditional methods in an unconventional way to investigate their perceptions and practical experiences.

The Teaching Procedures

The first year of education in any field of art or design is crucial in shaping the students' vision and developing their technical and creative abilities. During this period, students tend to focus their expectations on the certain and concrete. Therefore, the teaching process should be based on openness and unpredictability to prepare students for “the complex and unpredictable demands of their creative fields” after graduation (Austerlitz et al., 2008, p. 127). At the first session of the traditional textile printing course, I discussed with my students the main concepts of hand printing and tried to get a closer look at their expectations about the course. Most of the students held specific expectations that were all concerned with the technical procedures without considering the creative and artistic practices. As a result, throughout the course, I emphasized that traditional textile printing is flexible and innovative, and that it derives its uniqueness from the artist's experience and creative skills. I focused on three primary hand printing techniques: tie-and-dye, stencil, and batik. My teaching strategy for each technique consists of three stages, as follows:

The first stage involves teaching basic technical skills in hand printing techniques, such as tie-and-dye. We began by exploring the various dyeing methods and tying and folding techniques used to produce the common tie-and-dye patterns. In engaging with stencil, we started with creating and cutting simple patterns and stenciling with different tools like brushes and sponges on various textile materials. Similarly, in engaging with batik, we began with applying wax with tools like brushes and cantings to create lines, spaces, and crackle effects with dip dyeing and direct painting coloring techniques.

In the second stage, we explored the potential of traditional textile printing techniques, taking them to a more advanced level by using them as a medium for creative experimentation. Throughout the process, I encouraged my students to experiment with new tools and explore new possibilities for hand-printing techniques. We went beyond the expected and common patterns in tie and dye by improvising many folds and ties away from the symmetrical and familiar patterns. In stencil, we challenged the idea of repeatable patterns with separate edges and parts. Instead of the usual application of colors through stencils, we explored various textures and overlapping techniques. In batik, we utilized the wide potential of crackle effects to create unique art forms.

In the third stage, I considered bringing traditional textile printing up to a professional level.

At this stage, I provided enough space for my students to discover and develop their creative practices and take risks to fully immerse themselves in understanding and exploring the full range of hand-printing possibilities. The creative process is linked to originality, flexibility, and elaboration features. Flexibility is defined here as being open to new ideas, moving smoothly between concepts, and adjusting to several conditions (Xu & Hamari, 2022). We relied on rethinking traditional textile printing and utilizing its aesthetics in unconventional ways to create unique and flexible hanging textile designs inspired by various artistic sources. I also advised my students to put as much or even more effort into expressing their own ideas and visions as they do into perfecting and mastering printing techniques. Providing the students with appropriate space in the educational environment encourages them to be more “spontaneous and venture out of their comfort zone” (Lucardie, 2014, p. 444). Therefore, I encouraged each student to develop their perception of manual textile printing techniques without comparing their artwork to conventional forms or to other students' creations. Therefore, the students were fully open to new ideas, focused, and engaged in creative practice. They took tie-and-dye and stencil down a completely different path to produce original artwork. In using the batik technique, some students were interested in Egyptian heritage styles such as ancient Egyptian art, Egyptian folk art, and Islamic art. They tried to create sophisticated artworks based on these styles using the batik technique. Other students preferred to apply the batik technique in their own style to create professional, abstract hanging textile designs.

The course lasted for twenty-eight weeks, with each stage taking three weeks, and each printing technique taking nine weeks from the beginning to the professional level. The professional level is not only associated with technical aspects but also with expressing the designers' visions and experiences. At the end of the academic year, the students' projects were evaluated, and they were asked to respond to an online questionnaire.

The Design of the Online Questionnaire

The questionnaire to evaluate the course was distributed anonymously to the students via Google Forms after the completion of the course. I asked my students to express their opinions honestly and freely, and participation was entirely voluntary. Students responded to it at the conclusion of the academic year and after the final evaluation, to guarantee the openness and objectivity of the process and respect for the students' decision to participate or not. The questionnaire consisted of two main sections, and each one was designed to fulfill a specific objective, as described below.

The first section investigated the impact and effectiveness of the followed teaching procedure. This section mainly depends on accurate and concrete responses; therefore, it was designed to include seven closed-ended items. Students answered these questions on a five-point Likert

scale ranging from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree'.

The second section aimed to reveal the nature of traditional textile printing by understanding the full range of the creative practice from the students' perspective. This section was divided into three categories, investigating the emotions and experiences of students before, during, and after the creation process of traditional textile printing. The first and second categories consisted of four closed-ended items and one open-ended, while the third category had two closed-ended and two open-ended questions. All closed-ended questions in this section were structured using a five-point Likert scale. This section is primarily concerned with students' individuality; thus, open-ended questions were designed to allow for a better interpretation of students' responses to the closed-ended items and to obtain greater insights into their actions and experiences regarding the creative practice of traditional textile printing. The structure of the questionnaire is shown in Table 1.

Table 1

The structure of the questionnaire

Section	Question number	Question	
The first Section (The impact of teaching procedure)	1	You practiced at least one traditional textile printing technique before the course.	
	2	Before the course, you expected this much creative practice in traditional textile printing.	
	3	Your perspective towards traditional textile printing changed completely after the course.	
	4	You enjoyed practicing traditional textile printing techniques.	
	5	You were able to express your feelings and ideas through traditional textile printing practices, regardless of how unusual they may seem.	
	6	Your ability to generate creative artworks using the vast potentials of traditional textile printing has been evolving gradually and cumulatively throughout the course.	
	7	You were constantly comparing your production to that of your peers during the course.	
The second	The first category	8	Your creative practice of traditional printing techniques was linked to a specific mood or emotional state of yours.

(Before)	9	You started to create at least one of the traditional textile printing techniques completely out of the blue and without any prior thought or planning.
	10	Before creating any traditional textile printing design, you can predict its final form.
	11	You are usually fully prepared and meticulously planned before embarking on the creative practice of traditional textile printing.
	12	Describe shortly your preparation or emotional state before creating an artwork that depends on traditional textile printing.
The second category (During)	13	You were constantly developing new perceptions and modifying your path during work, even if you had constructed a pre-determined plan to practice traditional textile printing techniques.
	14	While creating an artwork using hand printing techniques, you came up with an idea for a completely different new design.
	15	You were continually experimenting and producing unexpected results while practicing traditional textile printing techniques.
	16	In practicing traditional textile printing, you usually start with the first step, and then each step inspires you to the next one.
	17	Describe your emotional state during the practice of traditional textile printing.
The third category (After)	18	After finishing an artwork with traditional textile printing techniques, you continue to make modifications, additions, and deletions to it.
	19	Your final traditional textile printing artworks were mostly consistent with your initial perceptions or sketches.
	20	You entirely discarded a completed artwork created with traditional textile printing and decided to immediately start over
	21	Explain shortly your feelings and first actions after practicing traditional textile printing.

		22	Mention the most important aspect of a good traditional textile printing design from your perspective.

Results and Discussion

Thirty-two students responded to the questionnaire. The answers were analyzed by a content analysis and resulted in several themes. The results are as follows.

The First Section: New Perceptions, Enjoyment, and Beyond Comparing

The findings indicate that the majority of the students, about 66 percent, had previous experience with at least one traditional printing technique before enrolling in the course. However, most students (about 87 percent) did not expect that level of free and creative practice involved in the course. As a result, approximately 94 percent of the students changed their perception entirely towards traditional textile printing after the course. More than half of the students had been exposed to traditional textile printing techniques, yet they did not anticipate that broad level of creativity during the course, which reflects the common practice of the traditional textile arts as pure crafts and highlights the significance of this study. The results show that the majority of the students have different expectations of traditional textile arts at the beginning, which is consistent with their responses to me at the first session of the course. The followed teaching procedure led the students to build a new perception of traditional textile printing techniques as creative arts rather than strictly technical crafts.

Most of the students enjoyed experimenting with the different manual printing techniques. Through practice, they were able to express their ideas and convey their emotions. These results are considered positive impacts of the followed teaching procedure, as enjoyment is viewed as “a mechanism that promotes concentration” (Lucardie, 2014, p. 439) and linked to the ability to express emotions and represents an essential component that motivates students and enhances engagement in the educational environment. According to many studies, enjoyment feelings are usually attributed to the flow state, which indicates the deep engagement of the students within the educational process (Abuhamdeh, 2021). Also, promoting the students' ability to express their emotions results in more creative and satisfying artistic experiences (Wu, 2023). The vast majority of the students were able to develop their exploration skills in traditional textile printing on a gradual basis, which indicates the effectiveness of the progressive, three-stage teaching plan. Every step of the proposed model was built upon the progress of its predecessor, which refers to the compatibility of the followed teaching procedure with the first-year students' abilities and capacity for creativity. In addition, approximately 81 percent of the students were not focused on comparing their printed artworks to others, which reflects their individuality and ability to develop their path

in traditional textile printing practice. In art education, a student's non-comparing tendency indicates that the teaching strategy effectively fosters the student's authenticity, independence, and confidence (Mandour, 2022). However, the competitive nature of the rest of the students (about 19 percent) caused their comparing behaviour.

The Second Section

The questions were organized into three categories (before, during, and after) to reveal the nature of traditional textile printing by understanding the entire creative process from the students' perspectives.

Before the Creative Practice: Evoking Creativity and Curiosity, and Leaving the Comfort Zone.

The vast majority of the students (about 94 %) linked their creative practice to their emotional state, indicating that traditional textile printing is more of a creative process than a mechanical operation. The emotions, experiences, and moods of individuals have significant impacts on their creative practices (Zamar & Segura, 2021; Zenasni & Lubart, 2002). The creative practice itself is an emotional process that is immersive, complicated, and challenging for the artist (Luetkemeyer, et al. 2021). Approximately 81 percent of the students started practicing at least one artwork based on traditional textile printing unexpectedly and without any prior preparation or planning. Regularly, about 53 percent of the students preferred to be completely prepared before practicing traditional textile printing. However, almost 94 percent of the students could not predict the final result of the traditional printed textile before starting the creation process. These findings indicate that nearly half of the students usually practice traditional textile printing according to a plan, but the majority of the students, including the planned ones, created at least one traditional textile printed artwork spontaneously and could not expect the final form of their work. This confirms the nature of traditional textile printing as a creative and unpredictable form of art.

Some students also described their emotions, like excitement and curiosity. Promoting curiosity among students is crucial to increase their engagement and interest in exploring the educational environment (Al Thani, et al., 2020). Therefore, these responses confirm traditional textile printing techniques' unpredictable and dynamic nature. During the sessions, I observed that the more curious the students are before practicing, the more creative they get during practicing. Also, the more creative results they produce, the more excited they become to start a new one. Both creativity and curiosity are linked; they each foster the other (Ma & Wei, 2023). Some students mentioned their preparation of the required tools and materials, while others described their mental preparation related to imagination and style determination. Both cases indicate a certain level of planning, which confirms that some students planned

before practicing and were prepared in their own ways. Some students even have personal routines and rituals like drinking coffee or playing music before practicing. The students' tendency to have rituals before creating art can decrease their anxiety and promote their creative practice and spontaneous sense (Shipe, 2022). Additionally, some students mentioned leaving their comfort zones before practicing, indicating involvement in new and unexpected experiences. Providing students with appropriate space and exposing them to challenging and inspiring experiences outside their comfort zones can foster their creative practice within the educational environment (Wilson, 2018). All the responses in this category show that even the students who planned before practicing traditional textile printing did not expect the final result, which means that they could not determine their exact path before they started practicing. From their perspective, the planning step was associated with preparing tools and determining the main frame of their artwork. Students' attitudes and emotions before practicing prove that traditional textile printing is a creative and challenging form of art that requires constant exploration and includes wide possibilities away from paved roads.

During the Creative Practice: Generating Perceptions, Evoking Flow.

Almost all of the students (about 97%) including those who prefer to plan before practicing, were continually generating new perceptions and changing their course during practice. This indicates that the creative practice of traditional textile printing includes spontaneous and unexpected activities even in the case of pre-planning. Approximately 87 percent of the students were inspired by their own practice to create an entirely new design using traditional textile printing. In addition, most of the students were experimenting and constantly producing unexpected results during practice, reflecting the effect of the vast and unpredictable potential of traditional textile printing practice in establishing and maintaining a creative flow state. Thus, around 53 percent of the students did not follow a certain plan while practicing, but instead began with the first step, which inspired them to the subsequent one, etc.

The tension between planning and spontaneity refers to the dynamic and inspiring nature of traditional textile printing art. As a result, even though half of the students made plans before practicing, they frequently improvised and altered their course while practicing. The students' responses show the positive impact of traditional textile printing practices on their emotions. Responses like 'losing track of time', 'fully focused', 'happy to take risk', 'completely enjoyed' and 'challenged' clearly indicate students' involvement in the flow state during the practice. Losing track of time is related to the flow state, as it describes an entire immersion in an activity that demands all of the individual's attention and concentration. The flow state is characterized by a high degree of interest and enjoyment caused by full and persistent engagement. In addition, tasks with the right level of challenge enable the flow state to occur (Lavoie et al., 2022).

In the educational environment, instructors need to balance the challenge with the students' abilities to keep the flow state (Beese & Martin, 2019). In the teaching procedure, I considered the first-year students' capacities, so I kept the practice challenging but within the limits of their abilities. Throughout the course sessions, I progressively made the tasks more challenging to match their performances. The degree of professionalism the students attained at the conclusion of the course was impressive, as they were committed, engaged, and persistent in their creative practice. Lucznik et al. (2021) demonstrated that the flow state is more likely to be experienced in creative spontaneous practices. Thus, the traditional textile printing practice involves a high level of spontaneity that puts the students in a flow state by evoking their curiosity, keeping them challenged, and totally immersing them in exploring more unique possibilities. Also, students' responses like 'interested to see the final result', 'curious to examine and see the result of each step', 'surprised and amused', and 'confident to take risks' support the traditional textile printing practice's spontaneous character. The students could not predict how each step would end or how the final artwork would look, as they were exploring and changing their path in a way that was beyond their expectations.

Additionally, risk-taking is associated with creativity; it indicates the individual's ability to generate creative ideas by challenging established norms and their confidence toward unfavorable comparisons (Bonetto, 2021). Students' willingness to take risks reveals their openness to challenge conventions and reimagine the potential of traditional textile printing art. During the sessions, I noticed that the majority of the students, even if they preplanned their work, kept redesigning their ideas and were spontaneously inspired by the traditional printing techniques as if they were interacting with the textile material. All of the students' responses in the second category demonstrate the unpredictability, vibrant, challenging, and immersing nature of traditional textile printing art, which requires a high degree of improvisation during practice.

After the Creative Practice: Continuous Practice, Positive Evaluations.

About 91 percent of the students kept modifying their traditional textile printing artworks even after finishing. Nearly all of the students (about 97 %) agreed that the final artworks of traditional textile printing were different from their primal perceptions or sketches. Furthermore, almost 84 percent of the students totally discarded their finished production and started over with a new artwork immediately. These results highlight the unpredictable and dynamic nature of traditional textile printing, which demands spontaneity from the students and extends beyond the practice experience. As when some students started with a plan, they kept exploring and changing their path during and after practicing, or even discarded their work to start with another idea after gaining sufficient practical experience. During the course, I noticed that many students kept modifying their artwork after practicing, as they were constantly inspired and capturing new ideas. Some of them kept changing the path upon

finishing by reprinting or re-dyeing on the same fabric, while some started a new one with a totally new path immediately on a blank fabric. For the majority of the students, finishing a traditional printed artwork is directly linked to starting a new one. Responses like ‘accomplished and fulfilled’, ‘proud’, and ‘good and contented’ reflect the positive impact of traditional textile printing practice on students' emotions. Developing positive emotions after the practice is an outcome of the students' immersion and enjoyment of the experience. Positive emotions like fulfillment are usually associated with creativity and the flow state in the educational environment (Jin & Ye, 2022).

Applying developed procedures in teaching arts in higher education fosters students' creative abilities, including motivation and inspiration (Abilmazhinova et al. 2021). This explains responses like ‘motivated to start another one’ and ‘inspired’. The adaptability and unpredictability of traditional textile printing also positively influenced the students' emotions, as seen in responses such as ‘amazed by the unexpected results’ and ‘I can print whatever I imagine’. Finally, the students' perspectives on successful traditional printing reflect the nature of its creative practice as a whole, as their opinions were formed based on their lived experiences during the course. Thus, students' responses like ‘uniqueness’, ‘expressive of the designer's perception’, ‘revival of any art style’, and ‘creating unconventional colors and textures’ highlight the adaptive, flexible, dynamic, expressive, and creative nature of the traditional printing practice, which students could sense based on their experience during the course.

Table 2

The students' responses to the open-ended questions of the questionnaire

Category	Question number	The open-ended question	Samples of the students' feedback
The first category	12	Describe shortly your preparation or emotional state before creating an artwork that depends on traditional textile printing.	Feeling enthusiastic, preparing my dyes, brushes, and pigments; Playing my music and getting straight to work; Curious about the final look; Imagining multiple ideas in my head; Preparing my tools, coffee, and start; having mixed emotions of worry and excitement; Determining the concept of my work; Leaving my comfort zone.

The second category	17	Describe your emotional state during the practice of traditional textile printing.	Losing track of time; Interested to see the final result; Fully focused; Curious to examine and see the result of each step; Completely enjoyed; surprised and amused; Happy and confident to take risks; Feeling challenged.
The third category	21	Explain shortly your feelings and first actions after the practice of traditional textile printing.	Fulfilled and accomplished; motivated to start another one; Proud of my printed design; I can print whatever I imagine; Feeling good and contented; Taking professional photos of my designs; Inspired and excited; Amazed by the unexpected results.
	22	Mention the most important aspect of good traditional textile printing design from your perspective.	Uniqueness; To be expressive of the designer's perception; Creating unconventional colors and textures; Reflecting the artist's emotions and ideas; Revival of any art style; To be vibrant; Flexibility; Harmonious and authentic art.

Course Outcomes

Students' projects in Figure 1 show the unconventional outcomes of the tie and dye technique, with each sample differing from the other one and from the familiar symmetrical tie and dye patterns. While some students planned the positions of folds and ties in the fabric as seen in Figures (1-a) and (1-b), others like in Figure (1-c) crumpled the fabric spontaneously. Both types of students kept tying and dyeing the fabric multiple times, and the final results were totally unique and unexpected. Figure 2 exhibits a new level of stencil-printed textiles, where students were experimenting with stencilling on various surfaces such as burlap, scattered rice, and paperclips to create various textures. In addition, the students were able to create professional artwork compositions with connected areas and overlapped patterns. They tried to rethink the stencil printing technique beyond its most common forms. While all of the students planned the design's primary structures before working, they improvised many details and textures during stencilling. Figure 3 displays the wide potential of the batik technique to create original artworks inspired by the different forms of Egyptian heritage. As students mixed high technical skills with imaginative and creative abilities, expressing the originality of the Egyptian heritage in their own unique way, manifesting the aesthetic details and

symbols of ancient Egyptian art in Figure (3-a), Egyptian folk art in Figure (3-b), and Islamic art in Figure (3-c). Students explored the various textures of batik cracks, and the results were unpredictable. They kept trying to combine the spontaneous crackles with the heritage motifs in harmonious compositions. Figure 4 depicts the students' independence in expressing their abstract artistic concepts, depending on the batik technique. The students were inspired by the diverse textures of the crackle effects and began to create their own textures with brushes and improvise color gradations and transitions, as in Figures (4-a) and (4-b). Other students preferred to be fully prepared before working, like in Figure (6-c), where the student was influenced by the cubism style and sketched every detail before practicing, yet the outcome was totally unexpected.

Overall, the questionnaire results and the course outcomes show that providing the students with the appropriate space and focusing on gradually developing their expressing and exploring abilities, along with technical skills, could lead to creating a flexible and inspiring educational environment. Moreover, traditional textile printing is considered a uniquely creative art form that imposes its potential on the artist. While knowledge and technical skills are essential in this kind of art, imagination and creative practice come first. This practice requires a high degree of openness in experimenting and spontaneity. As whether the artist planned before practice or not, he/she would improvise many steps and make modifications during and even after practice, and the outcome would mostly be unpredictable.

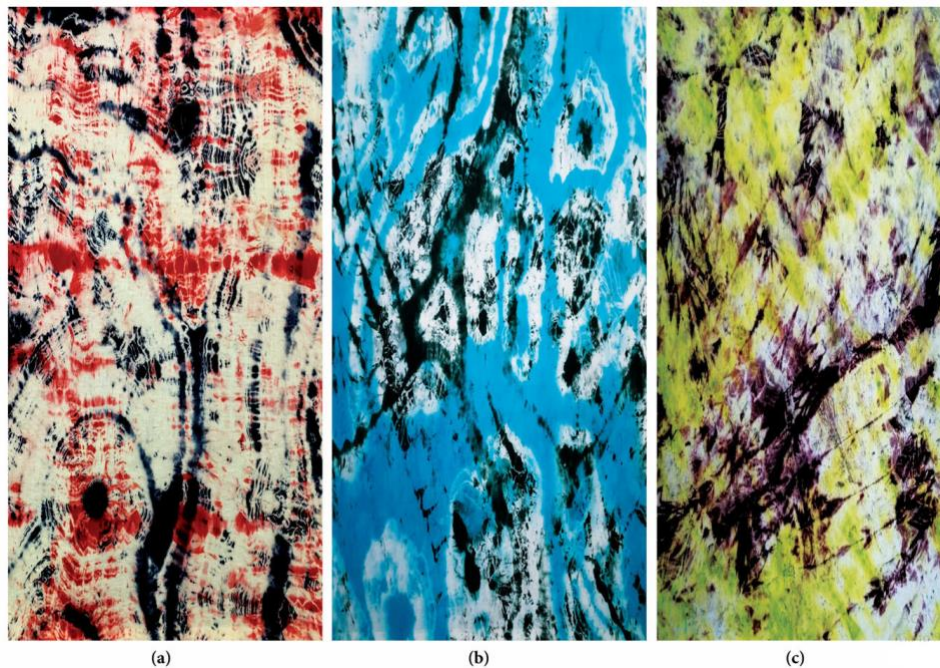


Figure 1. Samples of the students' tie-dye artworks. Students' names: Menna-Allah Essam, Maryam Ali, and Basmala Ehab.



Figures 2. Samples of the students' stencil abstract artworks based on overlapping patterns and textured surface techniques. Students' names: Salma Aoun, Afaf Abu Al-Enein, and Maryam Ali.



Figure 3. Samples of students' batik artworks inspired by the different forms of Egyptian heritage: (a) ancient Egyptian art; (b) Egyptian folk art; and (c) batik artwork inspired by Islamic art. Students' names: Esraa El-Ahmdy, Mawada Al-Fiqi, and Rawana Sherif.

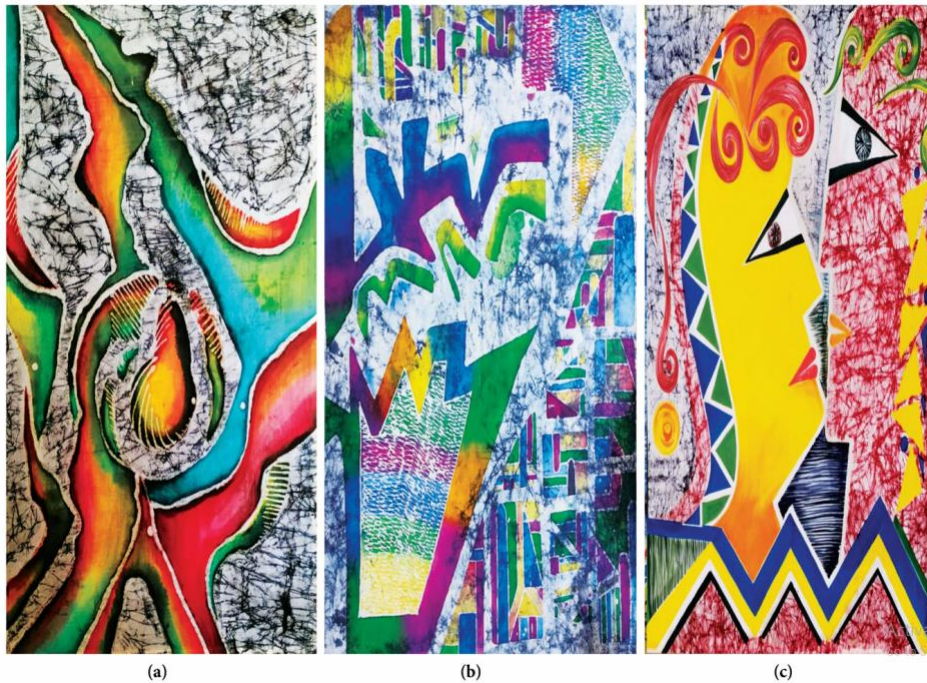


Figure 4. Samples of different students' abstract batik artworks. Students' names: Mawada Al-Fiqi, Salma Aoun, and Noran Radwan.

Conclusion

Promoting creativity and design thinking abilities among students is a top priority in art and design higher education (Mandour, 2022). The main focus in traditional arts education has been directed to the craft side by teaching the required skills and knowledge (Yue, 2009). However, the advancement of traditional arts education depends mainly on applying teaching models and strategies that support creative abilities instead of solely skills and knowledge (Al Shenawy & Tawfiq, 2022). Conventional art education models have drawn criticism for emphasizing the development of technical skills above emotional aspects (Wu, 2023). Thus, this paper proposes a teaching procedure that fulfills both sides of technical skills and creative thinking while considering the emotional aspects of practicing traditional textile printing and suggests a survey model to investigate the impact of the applied procedure and the creative practice in detail. Luetkemeyer et al. (2021) demonstrated that incorporating creative practice into the education process could build inclusive learning environments and constructively challenge conventional teaching. The study results confirm the possibility of re-exploring the traditional textile arts and experimenting with their wide potential through creative practice, which involves a certain degree of spontaneity and unpredictability. Additionally, the findings demonstrate various dimensions of the creative practice of what unfolds during this textile printing course in Egypt: the students' preparation and expectations before the practice,

their emotional risk-taking attitudes and immersion in the flow state during practice, and their feelings and impressions regarding the whole process after the practice. According to Sole et al. (2020) and Fuss and Daniel (2020), providing students with a safe space to experiment, explore, and take risks is essential to promoting their creative practice in higher education. The study results reinforce this idea. The proposed teaching procedure encourages creative practice and unique rethinking of textile printing by providing the students with appropriate space for experimentation, engagement, and risk-taking. Finally, the novel framework presented in this paper supports reimagining traditional textile art education through creative practice and provides a concrete challenge to perceptions of these techniques as just crafts.

Limitations and Implications

The study had two major limitations. The first was the relatively small sample size of thirty-three students. The Faculty of Applied Arts at Damietta University is an emerging regional faculty in Egypt. Each year, it admits a limited number of students due to the nature of the study, the available space and sources. In 2021-2022 academic year, only thirty-three students were admitted to the department of textile printing, and they registered in the traditional textile printing course. More studies need to be conducted on a larger population and traditional arts in all fields to get broader insights into creative practice through more lived experiences. The second limitation was in the timing of the data collection. The students completed the survey at the end of the academic year due to ethical considerations so that they could express their opinions freely and objectively after finishing the course. The students had to recall their feelings before and during the creative practice to respond to the different survey categories. It would have been more reflective, especially in the open-ended questions of the survey if the students could respond to the categories (before and during the creative practice) at the exact time before and within the practice.

Providing a teaching model for traditional arts that includes spontaneity, risk-taking, and flow experiences for the first-year students contributes to developing their creative and adaptive abilities for their future studies and careers. Involving risk-taking and flow experience in the educational process is crucial for encouraging creativity and preparing students for flexibility and adaptation to keep pace with rapid changes (Beese & Martin, 2019; Henriksen et al., 2021). Achieving the balance between creativity and technical skills, depending on the proposed model, could open horizons for reviving the traditional arts in general. As developing traditional arts education is essential to preserving and sustaining these kinds of arts (Widjajanti et al., 2018).

The proposed education model and the survey revealed the dynamic and spontaneous nature of traditional textile printing through lived experiences, which could lead to more progress in the textile design area and support the improvement of frameworks across other artistic

disciplines. Higher education institutions need to adopt innovative approaches to developing various traditional arts by reimagining them as creative and engaging arts. This research offers a starting point for that.

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